

What is claimed is:

1. A method used by a first application for supporting concurrent operation of a plurality of network compatible applications, comprising the steps of:

receiving user identification information;

initiating authentication of said user identification information; and

communicating a URL to a managing application for storage, said URL being for use in acquiring a web page providing a logon menu to support user access to a plurality of different applications in response to said authenticated user identification information.

2. A method according to claim 1, wherein

said communicating step also includes communicating additional parameters to said managing application for storage, said additional parameters including one or more of, (a) an authentication service identifier, (b) a language identifier, (c) a frame identifier identifying a browser frame to be used, (d) a timeout value and (e) user identification information.

3. A method according to claim 1, including the step of

receiving parameters from said managing application including one or more of, (a) a session identifier corresponding to a particular user logon initiation, (b) a session key for use in encrypting or decrypting URL data and (c) a parameter identifying success or failure of a request to establish a session.

4. A method according to claim 1, wherein

said URL is for use in acquiring a web page providing a common logon menu to support user access to a plurality of different applications including said first application following termination of said first application.

5. A method according to claim 1, wherein

said communicating step communicates a timeout value to said managing application for determining an inactivity period for triggering automatic logoff of at least one of a plurality of concurrently open applications.

6. A method according to claim 1, including the steps of communicating an authentication service identifier to said managing application; and

5 receiving a user identification code associated with said authentication service from said managing application.

7. A method according to claim 1, wherein

10 said step of communicating a URL to said managing application comprises encrypting said URL and communicating an encoded URL to said managing application.

8. A system supporting concurrent operation of a plurality of network compatible applications, comprising:

15 a browser application for receiving user identification information and for initiating communication of said user identification information to a second application in response to user selection of an icon displayed in a browser window; and

20 a managing application for receiving a URL from said second application for storage, said URL being for use in acquiring a web page providing a logon menu to support user access to a plurality of different applications in response to said authenticated user identification information.

9. A system according to claim 8, wherein

25 said managing application receives additional parameters from said second application including one or more of, (a) an authentication service identifier, (b) a language identifier, (c) a frame identifier identifying a browser frame to be used, (d) a timeout value and (e) authenticated user identification information.

10. A system according to claim 8, wherein

30 said managing application communicates parameters to said second application including one or more of, (a) a session identifier corresponding to a particular user logon initiation, (b) a session key for use in encrypting or decrypting URL data and (c) a parameter identifying success or failure of a request to establish a session.

11. A method according to claim 8, wherein  
said managing application communicates a timeout period value to  
said plurality of different applications for determining an inactivity period for  
triggering logoff of individual applications inactive for said timeout period.

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12. A method according to claim 8, wherein  
said managing application maps a received authentication service  
identifier to a corresponding user identifier; and  
communicates said corresponding user identifier to at least one of said  
plurality of different applications.

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13. A method according to claim 8, wherein  
said managing application stores a user identifier and corresponding  
authentication service identifier received from said second application for use in  
determining a user identifier corresponding to said stored authentication service  
identifier for said plurality of different applications.

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14. A method according to claim 8, wherein  
said managing application decrypts said received URL.

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15. A system supporting concurrent operation of a plurality of Internet  
compatible applications including first and second applications, comprising:

a web browser application including,

a user interface display generator for generating a browser window  
containing icons enabling user initiation of operation of said first and second  
applications; and

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a menu generator for providing a logon menu common to said plurality  
of Internet compatible applications by acquiring a web page providing said common  
logon menu from a logon web page URL address provided to said browser application  
by said second application, said logon web page URL address being conveyed from  
said first application to said second application in response to user initiation of said  
second application via said browser window.

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16. A system according to claim 15, wherein  
said logon menu permits user entry of identification information  
including a userid and password.

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17. A system according to claim 15, wherein

said logon web page URL address is conveyed from said first application to said second application following communication of said URL address to a managing application and retrieval of said URL address from said managing application by said second application.

18. A system according to claim 15, wherein

said logon web page URL address is conveyed from said first application to other applications of said plurality of Internet compatible applications following activation of said other applications.

19. A system according to claim 15, wherein

said menu generator provides said logon menu in response to at least one condition of, (a) initial logon, (b) upon logoff from a session of activity, (c) a termination condition arising from an error condition and (d) upon time-out condition arising due to inactivity of said second application.

20. A system used by a first application for supporting concurrent operation of a plurality of Internet compatible applications, comprising:

an authentication processor for receiving user identification information and for initiating authentication of said user identification information; and

a communication processor for communicating a URL to a managing application for storage, said URL being for use in acquiring a web page providing a logon menu to support user access to a plurality of different applications in response to said authenticated user identification information.

21. A system used by a managing application for supporting concurrent operation of a plurality of network compatible applications, comprising:

a processor for receiving and storing a URL from a first application, said URL being for use in acquiring a web page providing a logon menu to support user access to a plurality of different applications; and

a communication processor for communicating said URL and a session identifier to a second application of said plurality of different applications in response to a request by said second application to said managing application to establish a session of user operation.

22. A system according to claim 21, wherein

said logon menu is provided for logon in at least one condition of, (a) initial logon, (b) upon logoff from a session of activity, (c) a termination condition arising from an error condition and (d) upon time-out condition arising due to inactivity of said second application.

23. A method supporting concurrent operation of a plurality of network compatible applications, comprising the steps of:

receiving and storing a URL from a first application, said URL being for use in acquiring a web page providing a logon menu to support user access to a plurality of different applications; and

communicating said URL and a session identifier to a second application of said plurality of different applications in response to a request by said second application to said managing application to establish a session of user operation.

24. A method for use in a system supporting concurrent operation of a plurality of Internet compatible applications including first and second applications, comprising the steps of:

generating a browser window containing icons enabling user initiation of operation of said first and second applications; and

providing a logon menu common to said plurality of Internet compatible applications by acquiring a web page providing said common logon menu from a logon web page URL address provided to said browser application by said second application, said logon web page URL address being conveyed from said first application to said second application in response to user initiation of said second application via said browser window.